



NASS Resolution in Support of Voter Registration Activities at Veterans Facilities

WHEREAS, the nation's Secretaries of State are committed to protecting an individual's right to vote and ensuring non-discriminatory, equal access to the elections system for all voters, including our nation's deployed troops and military veterans;

WHEREAS, state and local election officials are working hard to guarantee the franchise for our deployed troops and veterans, including those in U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical facilities within the United States, by providing all reasonable means of access to voter registration and absentee balloting materials;

WHEREAS, the medical treatment of our country's veterans is and should be the priority of the VA within the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) facilities, the VA also plays an important role by providing voter registration and absentee balloting information to patients in their medical facilities who request it;

WHEREAS, the longstanding practice of allowing VHA facility employees to assist veterans in registering to vote has provided valuable assistance to veterans in need;

WHEREAS, VHA Directive 2008-025, May 5, 2008 no longer permits on-site voter registration drives out of concern for disruptions to facility operations and possible Hatch Act violations;

WHEREAS, it is vitally important that the VA allow state and local election officials to provide assistance regarding voter registration, voter education, and absentee balloting to veterans under the care of the VHA through direct interaction by the state or local official, or through training of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) personnel;

THEREFORE, NOW BE IT RESOLVED that the National Association of Secretaries of State respectfully requests that the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs shall clearly acknowledge the constitutional and statutory authority of the nation's chief state and local election officials in providing voting assistance to our nation's veterans, and that such officials be exempted from any directives which prohibit voter registration drives and related activity within VHA facilities, and:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) urges Congress to amend the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) to require VHA facilities to offer the same voter registration opportunities to their clients as NVRA requires of State assistance agencies.

Expires: Summer 2013

ADOPTED the 28th day of July
in Grand Rapids, MI